



## **The Faster and Smarter Funding for First Responders Act (H.R. 1544)**

### **❖ Priority assistance to first responders facing greatest risk.**

- Terrorists are not arbitrary in selecting their targets; we cannot be arbitrary in protecting our nation.
- First Responder Grant Board will help prioritize grant applications based on threat, vulnerability, and consequences of a terrorist attack to persons and critical infrastructure.
- At least .25% of funds will be available to each state, each fiscal year, to reach minimum preparedness levels.
- States must prioritize spending among their jurisdictions based on risk.

**9/11 Commission Report (page 396):**  
“Homeland security assistance should be based strictly on an assessment of risks and vulnerabilities. ... [F]ederal homeland security assistance should not remain a program for general revenue sharing. It should supplement state and local resources based on the risks or vulnerabilities that merit additional support. Congress should not use this money as a pork barrel.”

### **❖ Streamlined terrorism preparedness grants.**

- The First Responder bill moves the planning process for using the grants upfront.
- Grantees must have approved homeland security plans to spend taxpayer money before getting taxpayer money.
- Grant applications must fit the homeland security plan and specify how money will be spent.
- States must make timely awards—80% of funds to local governments and first responders within no more than 45 days—or face penalties, including reduced or suspended grants, or direct grants to local governments.

### **❖ Specific, flexible, and measurable goals for state and local government terrorism preparedness.**

- Requires the Secretary to develop, promulgate, and update as necessary, national voluntary consensus standards for first responder equipment and training.
- Clear goals help states and localities focus effort and avoid wasteful spending, and to improve preparedness in specific and measurable ways.

### **❖ Regional terrorism preparedness grants.**

- States and regions, both intrastate and interstate, may apply for terrorism preparedness grants.
- While states will continue to play a central role in coordinating the distribution of grant funds to first responders at the local level, the Committee bill also addresses the unique needs of regions, and promotes regional planning and coordination.
- Regional grant requests must be consistent with applicable State Homeland Security Plans.